Antiques recovered from the godown of INTACH in M.P.

2805. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of unaccounted antiques were recovered sometime back from the godown of the INTACH in a restoration project at the heritage site of Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any probe has been ordered into the affairs so as to find out the magnitude of such illegal transaction and the persons involved;

(d) if so, whether the result of the probe has been received; and

(e) the steps taken, both preventive and corrective, in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. 11 sculptures were recovered from the godown of INTACH's contractor in Khajuraho and was seized by the Tehsildar, Raj Nagar. These have now been kept in the Treasury of Raj Nagar which is under the Collector, Chattarpur.

(c) and (d) An enquiry has been conducted by the State Department of Archaeology, Superintendent of Police, Chattarpur and a factual report has also been received from the Superintending Archaeologist, Bhopal Circle. Subsequent to this, an on the spot inspection was conducted by the D.G., A.S.I. to verify the veracity of the conclusions. The final report is awaited.

(e) The local police at Khajuraho has been asked to maintain strict surveillance.

Encroachment near heritage sites

2806. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Garbage rules in this Monument", "Concrete doesn't see merit in heritage or court orders" and "Money can buy you heritage here" apprearing in the Express Newsline, Indian Express, Delhi dated 22nd April, 2002, 8th May, 2002 and 11th August, 2002 respectively.

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto;

(c) the details of action taken to clear encroachments, prevent illegal sale and stop construction work in prohibited area around protected monuments and heritage sites; and

(d) the steps taken for conservation, upkeep and maintenance of these monuments and creating facilities for tourists?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Central Government is seized of the matter. Of the monuments referred to, Mubarak Shah's tomb and Mosque and Teen Burji are protected by the ASI. The ASI has issued show-cause notices, as per provisions of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1958 and Rules thereunder. FIRs have also been lodged with the respective police stations. Also, the MCD, which is vested with the power to regulate building constructions in Delhi, has been repeatedly requested not to pass building plans without obtaining NOC's from the Archaeological Survey of India. Also, heritage buildings referred to in the articles, 'Money can buy you heritage here' and 'Concrete doesn't see merit...' do not come under the purview of the ASI.

(d) Day-to-day maintenance and structural repairs to the centrally protected monuments is an on-going process. A conservation programme has been drawn by the Archaeological Survery of India for taking up special repairs to Teen Burji and the unknown tomb, and annual repairs to Mubarak Shah's Tomb and mosque. This includes provision of tourist amenities as well.

Road shows in Foreign Countries

2807. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to hold road show in the United Kingdom, South East Asia, Europe and America in order to attract tourists and assure foreign tourists that India is safe destination; and

(b) if so, when these shows are likely to be held?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Promotion of India's tourism products in the tourism generating markets is an ongoing process and the strategy includes advertising in print and electronic media, road shows, participation in fairs and exhibitions, dissemination of information through brochures, CD Roms, inviting of media personalities under the hospitality programme, web marketing, organization of workshops and seminars etc.